

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES—Wednesday, September 20, 2000

The House met at 10 a.m. and was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. COOKSEY).

DESIGNATION OF THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following communication from the Speaker:

WASHINGTON, DC,
September 20, 2000.

I hereby appoint the Honorable JOHN COOKSEY to act as Speaker pro tempore on this day.

J. DENNIS HASTERT,
Speaker of the House of Representatives.

PRAYER

The Chaplain, the Reverend Daniel P. Coughlin, offered the following prayer:

Lord God, as Americans, young and old, we love life and desire to see good times. Yet You have told us: "Whoever would love life and see good days must keep the tongue from evil and lips from speaking deceit; must turn from evil and do good; seek peace and pursue it. For the eyes of the Lord are on the righteous and His ears turned to their prayer, but the face of the Lord is against evildoers."

Lord God, deepen our desires for what is good and free of deceit. Perhaps the simple discipline of containing our speech today will calm the atmosphere around us, create solid ground for true dialogue, and bring peace to our corner of the world, now and forever. Amen.

THE JOURNAL

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair has examined the Journal of the last day's proceedings and announces to the House his approval thereof.

Pursuant to clause 1, rule I, the Journal stands approved.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Will the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. WELLER) come forward and lead the House in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mr. WELLER led the Pledge of Allegiance as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

TRIBUTE TO EMERGENCY RESPONSE PERSONNEL IN NEVADA

(Mr. GIBBONS asked and was given permission to address the House for 1

minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. GIBBONS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and commend the emergency medical personnel that responded with skill and excellence to a tour bus crash which occurred on September 7 in a remote area, 20 miles north of Tonopah, Nevada.

The accident scene was every EMT's worst nightmare; 41 passengers trapped inside a bus which had turned over on its side and skidded for over 300 feet. Yet in a record 69 minutes, emergency crews from three counties treated, stabilized, and transported all of the patients, many of them critically injured, to three area medical facilities.

Mr. Speaker, although it is difficult to put into words the magnitude of this grave disaster, it is easy to express the respect and praise that I and my fellow Nevadans have for these emergency response personnel. Their commitment, courage, and dedication is an inspiration to every American. Forty-one people are living testimony today because of their heroism.

So today, Mr. Speaker, to all of the men and women who responded to the September 7 crash, and to all emergency response personnel in America, we thank you for a job well done, and God bless.

RUSSIAN PRESIDENT PUTIN DETERMINED TO DESTROY INDEPENDENT MEDIA IN RUSSIA

(Mr. LANTOS asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. LANTOS. Mr. Speaker, having just returned from Russia, I can testify that the Mafia permeates all aspects of Russian society, but when Mafia tactics are used by the government, we are dealing with a new threat.

I call my colleagues' attention to a lead editorial in today's Washington Post. "Russian President Vladimir Putin, who proclaimed his devotion to a free press during a recent visit to the United States, in fact seems determined to destroy Russia's independent media, the growth of which constituted one of the important successes of the post-Soviet era. His latest target is NTV, Russia's only independent television network. He is attacking it with a veneer of legality, but the underlying tactics of threats, imprisonments and political prosecution are not subtle."

Mr. Putin better change his course. He cannot be accepted by the civilized

world if he destroys one of the important achievements of the Yeltsin era—a free press. A free press is our last guarantee that Russia will develop in a democratic direction.

JUSTICE DEPARTMENT AND H.R. 4105

(Mr. TRAFICANT asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. TRAFICANT. Mr. Speaker, while Congress fights over small pay raises, the Justice Department gave \$180 million worth of bonuses. If that is not enough to promote the Peter Principle, Robert Bratt and Joe Lake got big bucks for illegal contracts, illegal hiring of cronies, and illegal visas for two lovers they called field operatives, and neither was even charged.

Let us check further. Colgate got \$110,000, Sposato got \$85,000, Vail got \$75,000. Meanwhile, my \$1 minimum wage bill is still being blocked in the Senate, and this group of cronies at the Justice Department maintains dossiers on myself and all my colleagues, making sure we do not destroy their gravy train.

Beam me up here. It is time to pass H.R. 4105 and put a bulldog right on their buns, big time.

TV AD SHOULD BE PULLED

(Mr. TALENT asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. TALENT. Mr. Speaker, an independent political group is running a television ad in Kansas City, Missouri, that is causing controversy that I want to comment on for my 1-minute.

According to the Washington Post, an actress in the ad portrays a mother who removed her child from the public school because "we didn't want him in a place where drugs and violence was fashionable. That was a bit more diversity than he could handle."

Mr. Speaker, I have not seen the ad. I am not familiar with the group that sponsored it. But the statement I read, if it is in the advertisement, comes perilously close to bigotry, which is a sentiment that has no place in American politics. Since the ad goes on to urge people to vote Republican, I think Republicans have a special responsibility to denounce it.

Mr. Speaker, one of my favorite passages from the Bible is from First Samuel. It says, "God does not see the